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# United States Patent [19]

Luke et al.

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[54] **METHOD FOR AUTOMATICALLY IDENTIFYING, MATCHING, AND NEAR-MATCHING BUYERS AND SELLERS IN ELECTRONIC MARKET TRANSACTIONS**

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[21] Appl. No.: **09/186,764**

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## Related U.S. Application Data

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[51] **Int. Cl.<sup>7</sup>** ..... **G06F 17/60**

[52] **U.S. Cl.** ..... **705/26; 705/27; 705/37**

[58] **Field of Search** ..... **705/26, 53, 75, 705/80, 10, 27, 37, 400, 20; 395/671**

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## [57] ABSTRACT

A computer implemented method for market participants for automatically identifying and matching offer data with solicitation data, the solicitation data stored in a solicitations data base, the method comprising the steps of: receiving offer data consisting of numerical linear ranges defining a lower point, an upper point, and a preferred point for each dimension of the offer data storing the received offer data in a database; comparing points for each dimension of the stored offer data to corresponding dimensions of the solicitation data to: identify solicitations with matching preferred points, identify solicitations with preferred points having a near match with the offer data when the upper point and the preferred point of the offer data are between the upper point and the preferred point of the solicitation data, and identify solicitations with preferred points within corresponding ranges to the offer data when at least one of the lower point, the upper point, and the preferred point of the offer data is between the lower point and the upper point of the solicitation data; transmitting the identified solicitations with matching preferred points, near matching preferred points, and preferred points within corresponding ranges to originator of the offer data.

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19 Claims, 11 Drawing Sheets

